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OLC 70-0777

2 November 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Conversation with Ed Braswell re Meeting of Director
with Chairman Stennis, Fulbright Amendment
Problems, etc.

1. This morning I called Mr. Braswell, Chief of Staff, Senate Armed Services Committee, to find out about Senator Stennis' plans and availability in connection with the possible meeting between him and the Director. Braswell said he was quite confident that the Senator had gotten the message about the Director's call ten days ago and his failure to reply was no doubt due to the fact that he is busily campaigning in order to get out a good vote, even though his opposition represents no threat. However, Braswell will verify that Stennis has gotten the message and will try to find out about Stennis' plans. In any event Braswell recommends that the Director not try further to contact Stennis until after the election.

2. Braswell asked about Laird's statement quoted in today's press that the Soviets now have 1400 ICBM's operational or under construction. I said this figure was approximately correct but that I would have to check to give him a precise answer. Braswell said he would like an updated, detailed fact sheet on the Soviet ICBM program.

3. Referring to the Neil Sheehan story in the New York Times of 18 October regarding Communist penetrations in South Vietnam, Braswell asked if he could have a copy of the paper in question for Senator Stennis. I said the paper itself was out of date and was only a working paper, not a community estimate, so I thought the Chairman would find an up-to-date briefing more useful.

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4. Turning to the Fulbright amendment, Braswell said he thought there was still some confusion about just what its impact was on some of our programs. I said I was certain this might be true, and I thought this was one of the things the Director would like to discuss with the Chairman at the first opportunity in light of the Director's trip to Southeast Asia. Braswell said that the Chairman had understood from Deputy Secretary Packard that the Defense Department's position was that no existing programs were prohibited by the amendment. Braswell said he thought this contention was extremely questionable. I said there were indeed some problems about the application of the amendment and this had been something the Director had very much in mind during his recent trip. I said I was not sure just what conclusions he had arrived at, but I did know that he wanted to report to the Chairman as soon as convenient.

5. Braswell said one of the main problems was that the Committee had never been able to get a statement from Defense Department as to U.S. policy in Southeast Asia, so it could not judge whether certain programs served our policy. He said he understood that the Agency's position was that we simply tried to do what we were told to do by the policymakers, but were in no position to recommend or defend policy as such.

6. In conclusion, Braswell said he would like to be sure the material we had given him earlier on the impact of the Fulbright amendment on certain programs was still valid. If not, however, he would like us to provide him an updated version. I said we would do so.

JOHN M. MAURY
Legislative Counsel

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